



MOUNTAIN BACKPACKERS CLUB

Fixtures List: January-March 2018

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER – First Quarter 2018

Greetings hikers. The festive season is now behind us, so it is now time to break out your hiking boots and work off those extra centimetres and kilograms by walking a few kilometres. There are plenty of interesting and challenging hike to sign up for this quarter, not forgetting the GT at the end of March. The camp-outs were extremely popular and well attended last year, so we will be planning more for 2018. We will also be reaching out to the members for suggestions on how we can enhance their membership experience.

Please join us for our first social of the year on Thursday 25th January. The event is the 2017 photo competition judging. If anyone out there has done an exciting trip, and would like to share their experience with us at one of our Thursday night socials, please feel free to contact me.

Don't forget to visit the MBC Facebook page for news and report-backs on hikes and socials. Remember that the fixtures list can also be downloaded from www.mountainbackpackers.co.za, along with a host of other interesting information about hiking and equipment.

Please remember to pay your subs for 2018 if you haven't already. Many thanks to those who already have!

The mountains are calling. See you on the trail.

Andy Brown
Chairman: Mountain Backpackers Club

MOUNTAIN BACKPACKERS CLUB COMMITTEE 2018

Chairman	Andy Brown	chairman@mountainbackpackers.co.za
Vice Chairman	Heidi Cox	info@mountainbackpackers.co.za
Treasurer	Bobby Stanton	031 465 5535
Fixture List / Magazine	Andy Brown	072 101 2498
Marketing	Heidi Cox	082 706 4283
Secretary	Amy Grantham and Brent Kloppers	amygrantham@futurenet.co.za
Social media	Heidi, Andy, Amy	info@mountainbackpackers.co.za
New Member Liaison.	Sorin Dimitriu	084 681 8920
Socials coordinator and events.	Amy Grantham and Brent Kloppers	amygrantham@futurenet.co.za
Website.	Lungile Dlamini and Trish Dunlop	
Membership: (paid position)	Philip van Gass	083 440 1651

Website: www.mountainbackpackers.co.za

Email: info@mountainbackpackers.co.za

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2018

Single memberships: R275

Family membership: R350

(50% Reduction in Fees are offered to NEW members from September to November 2018)
(NEW members joining up in December will be at the 2019 rate, but will include December and all of 2019.)

If you have not done so already, kindly pay your 2018 MBC Fees as soon as possible.

Please pay by **EFT** and NOT cash deposit or cheque at the bank! (The bank charges are prohibitively expensive).

Should you wish to pay cash, please pay the Chairman/committee member at one of the Socials (make sure you get a receipt!) and we will process your payment with the administrator.

If you do pay by EFT, please give us a meaningful reference –surname, name and membership number is ideal.

Please EFT your payment to:

FNB - Westville Branch

Account Name: MOUNTAIN BACKPACKERS CLUB

Account No: 50780007264. Branch code: 223526

THE GRADING OF HIKES

1. Very easy trip.
2. Easy trip.
3. Moderate trip – Hiking fitness required.
4. Strenuous trip – Backpacking fitness required.
5. Very strenuous trip- High degree of physical fitness essential.

Please take particular note of **distance and elevation** as well as the **grading of the backpacking trip** you intend doing and ensure that your level of fitness is adequate.

FIXTURE LIST – 1st QUARTER

January 2018

Date	Description	Dist / Elevation	Leader	Contact	Grd
20-21 Jan	Monk's Cowl area: Vaalribbokkop Cave via Jacob's Ladder and Stable Cave, returning via old lookout hut, Hlathikulu Nek, Blind Man's Corner and the Sphinx.	38km 610m	David Gay	031 764 0298 (18:00 to 20:00 Mon-Thurs only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	3+
27 Jan	African Fish Eagle Trail. Lots of birdlife, walk through Beachwood Mangroves and along North bank of Umgeni river, meet at Green Hub Durban @ 08h00 & leave 08h15. Rain stops Play. Bring cash for tea at Springfield SPCA 1/2 way. Please confirm if joining walk by 26 Jan.	13km	Heidi Cox	heidi.dinan@gmail.com 0827064283	2
28 Jan	Howick area: Day hike in " The Ambers " - hike in extended area - Lovely views around Howick & surrounding areas, plenty of game & bird life - Combined hike with other clubs. - MAXIMUM 12 MEMBERS , first come first served - Last booking by Wed 24 Jan. R20 per person.	26 km 465m	Keith Ashton	keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	2+

February 2018

Date	Description	Dist / Elevation	Leader	Contact	Grd
3-4 Feb	Cobham area: Glade Cave via Lakes Cave, returning via Siphongweni plateau and Tortoise Rocks.	33km 530m	David Gay	031 764 0298 (18:00 to 20:00 Mon-Thurs only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	4
10-11 Feb	Mnweni area. Follow the Mnweni Valley to Jubilee Cave. Magnificent views of Icidi Pass and Ifidi Buttress	34km 700m	Andy Brown	072 101 2498 andybza@gmail.com	4

17-18 Feb	Highmoor area. Assvoelkrans Cave. Ideal for first timers and those are unsure of their fitness. Waterfall and big pool next to the cave. Bring a costume.	10km 100m	Farouk Omarjee	031-577 6336 081 530 8447 farouko@telkomsa.net	3
17-18 Feb	Garden Castle area: Tent at the top of Wilson's Pass , returning via Mashai Pass.	25km 1410m	David Gay	031 764 0298 (18:00 to 20:00 Mon-Thurs only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	5
18 Feb	Howick area: Umgeni Valley Nature Reserve - Lovely local day hike in a beautiful area - great views & chance to see plenty of game & bird life. Several trail variations. As it can be hot this time of year we will keep to high ground. Combined hike with other clubs. Last booking by Wed 14 Feb. R30 per person	15km	Keith Ashton	keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	

March 2018

Date	Description	Dist / Elevation	Leader	Contact	Grd
3-4 Mar	Loteni area: Camp at the top of Buttress Pass and return via Hlathimbe Pass (North).	32km 1570m	David Gay	031 764 0298 (18:00 to 20:00 Mon-Thurs only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	5
10-11 Mar	Garden Castle area: Follow the Giants Cup Trail from Garden Castle to Hidden Valley . Ideal for first time backpackers. Lovely pool next to the camp site. Bring a costume. NB: Hiking tents required.	12km 200m	Farouk Omarjee	031-577 6336 081 530 8447 farouko@telkomsa.net	3
10-11 Mar	Lotheni area: (Southern Berg via Himeville) Camping at Lotheni with day hikes.	12km	Heidi Cox	heidi.dinan@gmail.com 0827064283	2
10-11 Mar	Monks Cowl area: Intunja via Zulu Cave. Relaxing first day to the cave. Summit Intunja on Sunday morning and return via Hlathikulu Nek and the Sphinx.	32km 900m	Andy Brown	072 101 2498 andybza@gmail.com	4
17-18 Mar	Sani Pass: Gxalingenwa Cave from Sani (Top) Mountain Lodge. GT resupplies for Sani Pass will be left at Sani Mountain Lodge.	20km 540m	David Gay	031 764 0298 (18:00 to 20:00 Mon-Thurs only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	3+
17-21 Mar	Cathedral Peak area: Saturday camp at bottom of Cockade Pass 10km. Sunday climb Cockade Pass camp at stream just south of the Pass on escarpment. Monday hike along edge of escarpment for views to Easter cave. Tuesday, down Mlamboja Pass then boulder hop down zeni River to zeni cave. Wendsday return.	36km 1520m	Greg Walker	076 154 3643	5

23-26 Mar	SANI Lodge Backpackers: - Stay overnight in comfortable lodge with various forms of accommodation available - self - catering or meals are available. Very good hikes each day from this base, situated on the tarred section of the Sani Pass road, about 16 km before the border post - Combined hike with other clubs - Book early to secure a place. - Last bookings by 9 March. Costs: Camping circa R100. Dorm circa R180.	10-15km per day.	Keith Ashton	keimarg@iuncapped.co. za	2+
24 March to 7 April	GRAND TRAVERSE. North, to South 14 Days. Sentinel Car Park to Bushman's Nek. Co-leaders. David Gay and Andy Brown	245km 9300m	David Gay Andy Brown	072 101 2498 andybza@gmail.com	5
30 March to 1/2 April	Giants Castle area. Grand Traverse resupply: Bannerman's Pass 3/4 Days VOLUNTEER leader and hikers NEEDED Please contact Andy Brown	28km 1535m	TBA	072 101 2498 andybza@gmail.com	4+

Note: It is the prerogative of a hike leader to accept or reject members or other applicants from participating in his or her hike, after questioning the applicant on their fitness and experience. It is a privilege not a right to participate in a hike.

Day hikers are requested to phone the leader beforehand to confirm their attendance and that the hike is still on schedule.



DURBAN RAMBLERS HIKING CLUB
Saturday and Sunday Hiking Programme: **JANUARY – 2018**

Sat 20 Jan 2018 – Nkutu Falls Trail (KKNR)

Hike Leader: Ann 083 666 5630 | Grade 3 Strenuous; ±9km

A long hike over grassland and through forest with beautiful views to the Nkutu Waterfall. BYO drinks and picnic for social afterwards at the lovely picnic site. Entrance fee R30. ****Meet at 13:45pm at the Nkutu picnic site at 62 Valley Drive (Kloof/ Waterfall).**

Sun 21 Jan 2018 – Isipingo Circuit

Hike Leader: Jon Stevens 082 459 1522 | Grade 2; 12-15km

Explore the beaches behind the old airport. Bring your costume. Back by lunch.

Sat 27 Jan 2018 – Phezulu Safari Park (Botha's Hill) – members only hike!

Hike Leader: Linda 083 353 8319 | Grade 2 Moderate; ±7km

Hike will be a guided walk through the beautiful park. Drinks afterwards at the restaurant. Entrance fee to be confirmed closer to the time. ****Meet and park at 13:30pm (note earlier time) at Phezulu Safari Park (5 Old Main Road, Hillcrest).**

Sun 28 Jan 2018 – Ballito to Salt Rock

Hike Leader: Margie Forbes 073 437 6915 | Grade 2; ±10km

Beach hike with tidal pools and rocky outcrops from Ballito to Salt Rock. Return same route or through the suburbs. Optional lunch/ drinks afterwards. Bring costumes for a quick dip. Petrol sharing R20.

MBC SOCIAL CALENDAR – PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE

Directions to Sherwood Bowling Club - 860 Jan Smuts Highway

From Durban - Take N3 out towards PMB, after Tollgate take the Sherwood off-ramp and turn right under the freeway in to Jan Smuts Highway, up the hill, past under the pedestrian bridge and at the first traffic lights take a right U-turn to join the opposite lane, drive down and turn left just before the pedestrian bridge, up this narrow lane for about 200m and then turn left through the gate into the Bowling Club parking.

From Westville - take the M13 towards Durban, past Westwood Shopping centre, through 45th Cutting traffic lights, down Jan Smuts Highway, turn left just before the pedestrian bridge, up this narrow lane for about 200m and then turn left through the gate into the Bowling Club parking.

From PMB, from Hillcrest take the N3 past the Pavilion and four-level interchange, take the Sherwood glide-off, keep left in to Jan Smuts Highway, past under the pedestrian bridge and at the first traffic lights take a right U-turn to join the opposite lane, drive down and turn left just before the pedestrian bridge, up this narrow lane for about 200m and then turn left through the gate into the Bowling Club parking.



SOCIAL CALENDAR

MBC Socials normally take place every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month.

We gather at 07:00 PM for a 07:30 start.

MBC Socials for 1st quarter 2018

25 January	MBC Annual 2017 Photo Competition.	
8 February	<p>Transylvania-Romania is one of the wildest places Europe still has to offer and autumn is a magical season to visit it! Autumn in Romania is when an already a stunning country transforms into something so beautiful, you'd have to pinch yourself to make sure you're awake.</p> <p>Last October I had the chance to travel with my brother and my son to Transylvania. If there's one place to see in autumn, it's the Western Carpathians-or Apuseni Mountains as the Romanians call them. The richly forested mountain dresses itself in a fantasy of colours and because we travelled in low season we had them exclusively for ourselves.</p>	Sorin Dimitriu
22 February	<p>New Members Evening Mountain Backpackers Club is organising a special social evening dedicated to all new and potential new members. There will be several short presentations on the club history, an introduction of the organising committee and group leaders, hikes and trails, hiking equipment and social media. By organizing this event, we try to introduce the new members to the facilities and hiking opportunities offered by the club.</p> <p>For the less experienced hikers we will provide guide-lines that will help them get geared quickly and out there hiking This is a night of fellowship where the new and old club members get together to share their common interest and experiences. Snacks are provided, and a cash bar is available.</p>	Sorin Dimitriu and MBC committee
8 March	TBA	
22 March	TBA	